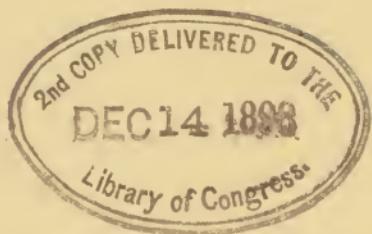


**IDEALS AND PROGRAMMES**

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# IDEALS

AND

# PROGRAMMES

BY

JEAN L. GOWDY

PRINCIPAL WASHINGTON SCHOOL, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.



SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

1898

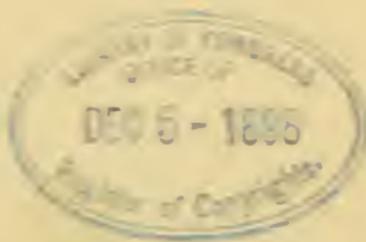
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TO THE TEACHERS OF THE  
Peabody School, Minneapolis  
TO WHOM MANY OF THESE THOUGHTS  
WERE FIRST GIVEN, AND IN  
REMEMBRANCE OF WHOSE WARM FRIENDSHIP  
I WOULD SAY

"Memory with her eyelids wet,  
Fain would thank thee even yet."



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## I AN IDEAL

Gibson says: "Every man has two educations; one which he receives from others, and one, the more important, which he gives himself."

How then are we educated? By everything that comes into our lives from the cradle to the grave.

It is not necessary that we let the world know what is our dearest aim in life, but it is necessary that we have such an aim. There is no true education without this. All work, all life, before this aim is chosen, is haphazard and unsatisfactory.

There is a story of three little boys who started out one winter day to see which could make the straightest path in the new fallen snow. Each started out with a will; each meant to succeed. Two of them went aimlessly, but the third fixed his eyes on an oak and thus made the straightest path. So it will be with our lives.

When once this life aim is chosen, what next? Absolute consecration to it! We will say that the life work one chooses is that of a teacher,—not one who keeps school, but a skilled workman or professional. We must always aim for the highest. "Hitch your

wagon to a star," Emerson says; the highest may never be reached, but a life can not but be purer, better and brighter for having aspired to it.

Absolute consecration ! This does not mean that one shall talk, think or read of nothing but teaching, that one shall teach during the day and dream of it during the night; but it does mean that this wonderful, absorbing work must never be entered as a go-between only to last a short period. Everything we do must mean something, and then, if we are called into another field of usefulness, are we not better prepared to enter that field, whatever it may be, for having done earnest work ? Yes, for earnest work is never done in vain.

The next thing is now a good thorough general education. No teacher is safe without one. Some have many difficulties to overcome in gaining such an education. Well; what costs effort is always the more highly prized. Our country so abounds in public schools, normals, colleges, and universities, that we almost feel that no one has an excuse for being uneducated. It is not, however, an easy matter to tell another what he may or may not do. We can not always follow closely in the line of our own inclination.

The most truly educated little lady that I ever met is one who was so hampered by circumstances that the college or university education which she so much de-

sired was not possible. Did she give up in despair? No indeed! She joined the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, read the four years' course, and received the diploma. She has since then read the Bible Course, the English Literature Course, the Thackeray Course, the Shakespeare Course, and many others. There is hardly a subject upon which she can not talk, and talk well.

If hampered by circumstances, let us call it discipline, but never lose sight of that for which we aim. While working to gain means to secure an education, we may pursue some studies by ourselves. There are many lines which may be followed alone. History, for instance, can always be studied with ease. Some branches of natural science may also be taken up alone.

I once knew a young lady, who, being obliged to leave school to earn money to enable her to go on with her college course, made a study of the wild flowers of the section of country in which she lived, during her few leisure hours. She pressed the specimens carefully, and wrote out fully the analysis of each. These were arranged neatly in a herbarium. This she took with her when she went back to school. It was examined, and pronounced so excellent that she was excused from further work in the study of botany.

We must learn also to economize. The last year's hat may be worn, and the latest style in gowns or coats

be put out of mind. What will it matter after this satisfactory education is gained, whether the skirt had three breadths or eleven? Clothes will wear out and soon be gone, but this knowledge will only become fresher and brighter by constant use.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom," says Solomon; and wisdom is education and culture mixed with good common sense.

Just a few words about this education which it will be best to get. One who intends to be a teacher can not neglect or drop out a single study in the course he chooses, even if he intends to be a special teacher. It is never well to pursue single branches exclusive of all others. Col. Parker says, "I have known teachers to pursue mathematics alone until their minds became ciphers."

All the studies in each course were placed there for some wise purpose and by persons who have made the subject a special study. Why study music? That we may become musicians and bread-winners by this means? Not necessarily, but that through this study we may gain broader and fuller ideals. What if John or Mary do not develop into wonderful singers, will they not be more capable of enjoyment that they can intelligently appreciate good music?

I have heard parents say, "My boy is wasting his time trying to draw; he can not even draw a straight

line.' Well, is a straight line artistic ? Look at our finest pictures, how many straight lines can be found ? Many a great artist can not draw one. The real line of beauty is a compound curve ; perhaps John can draw that, and will succeed. At any rate he will be a broader and better man for having known something about drawing. For our own best good we should study both music and drawing as taught in the schools, to say nothing of the fact that if we expect to be teachers, we shall need to understand these branches, for they have come into the course of study, and come to stay. Besides this need, no one knows, until he has tried faithfully, whether he has talents in these directions or not. Sometimes talents lie wholly on the surface, and sometimes they lie far beneath.

Some of the studies in the higher courses may, on first thought, seem useless in some walks of life, or it may seem that the subjects are so deep that merely a glimpse can be obtained in the short time allotted to them,—Latin and Greek seem thus to many ; but even in this short time one may gain a glimpse of something that will lift him into nobler and grander realms in the future.

When this practical education is gained, one of the mountain peaks of life has been reached. Not the highest, I hope, but one high enough to enable the traveller to look back over the toilsome journey and be

proud and happy. One who has travelled thus far should now take a broad, clear view of his life, both past and future. Dimly before him rise still higher and grander mountains which he may wish to climb. Let him turn away from these for a few minutes, and looking back, think of what he has gained in the journey already taken, and see what education he has given himself. He has builded better than he knew. First he has gained steadfastness of purpose, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. How often he has given up pleasures, luxuries, or even necessities, that he might gain this standpoint. How many times he has fought against weariness, pain, or inclination to do otherwise. Thus he has trained the will. Discouragements have come; a pessimistic friend has prophesied that he could never get through, and he has at times been fearful that the prophecy would be a true one. In his earnest work he has learned to get along without praise; to do his simple duty and keep his own council; to be independent and courageous. Who shall say this is not the more important education ?

Shall I tell you what words gave me the most help of any in my teaching experience ? My principal once said to me: "I have never yet been satisfied with any teaching I have ever seen; when I am I think I shall be willing to die. You have never done the best work you are capable of doing; when you do, I may

be satisfied. I recommend you for your possibilities, not for your work."

While a teacher is gaining knowledge, he is gaining the science of teaching; while teaching, he is gaining the art of teaching; for science is knowing, and art is doing.

But I hear some one say: "How can a teacher pursue studies while teaching? While I am teaching I am bound to make thorough preparation for my work, and that takes all my time." The first part of the statement is true, but I do not agree with the second. Thorough preparation for classes is a stumbling block to many teachers. There are in our schools the day laborer, the skilled workman, and the professional. Only that the day laborer may become the skilled workman has he a right to be in the ranks at all. Too often he remains the day laborer throughout life. Lack of ambition, a mistake in the calling, or a want of system are generally the causes of such failures. There is no need to dwell upon the first two, but I do wish to say a few words about the last;—a want of system.

A teacher generally knows in which branches most preparation is needed for every day class work. Why not make these branches the special study during the year? We must first fill ourselves; for the more we know of a subject, the simpler and clearer we can present it to the pupil. If a teacher fully understands a

subject, without doubt it will be well taught. Methods may not always be the best, but, in some way the pupils will understand, and this is, after all, the principal thing. If the failure is in the science lessons, natural science may be made a special study; if in arithmetic, some branch of mathematics,—it matters little which one, for the difficulties we ourselves have will show us how to sympathize with the pupils in theirs. Ten to one, the studies we fail in teaching are the ones we dislike, and the failure in the art of teaching comes from the failure in the science, which should always precede the art.

In work with children, a teacher is gaining a knowledge by experience that no book, however valuable, could teach as well:—knowledge in practical psychology or child study. A systematic teacher will always have some such books as Prof. Scripture's "Thinking, Feeling, Doing", or Elizabeth Harrison's "A Study of Child Nature", with which to compare the judgments formed, and thus lay a firm foundation for this practical psychology. There is no teacher like experience in this study, and I have known teachers, after pursuing the study in this comprehensive way, to take their examinations, and pass so creditably as to be excused from further study of this branch in the normal school. There are so many ways of finding out what children know or do not know, that it seems to me a great

piece of folly to spend much time in looking over papers. A teacher should be full of devices for forming correct judgments regarding his pupils that will take the place of this laborious method. The teacher who spends a great deal of time in this way, is truly a day laborer. We do too much written work in our schools, and not enough oral. It is a very fine thing to be able to talk well.

Work should be planned ahead. A note book should be kept in which to jot down the difficult points in the lesson to-day, and these should be brought up the following day. Work should be easier this year than last year, this month than last month, this week than last week, to-day than yesterday. If it is so, a teacher may feel that a system in teaching has been gained, and by system is meant the wise use of time.

Many teachers who understand a subject lack in questioning. They fail to make their meaning clear, and do not get the answers they expect. If this were my fault, I would take the lessons in which I seemed to have the most difficulty, and write them out in questions and answers. I would study to see what my own answer to my own question would naturally be, regardless of what I wished it to be. This can not fail to help in all questioning; to help also in gaining the art of clear, concise language.

Some are longing to become teachers in the larger

cities. In many ways these places have advantages; they give the libraries, art galleries, lectures, one is deprived of in small villages or in the country; but teachers in the large cities are deprived of many things which the country school teachers enjoy. What could they not do in nature study with the opportunities which the country affords? Oh, for the luxury of studying birds, insects, and flowers in their own environments! The city teacher brings a pitiable speck of nature to the little starving hearts of the children and tries to fill them; the country teacher can without trouble take the children to the nest of the robin or the meadow lark, to the home of the pasque flower and the violet, to the ant hill. Last year while the children were studying "King Solomon and the Ants", I longed to take them to a real country ant hill such as I used to see so often in my own childhood days. The fact that the king and his followers went around it would then have meant something to the children. I doubt much whether the one made on the sand table did. The days that linger longest in the memory of the children are the field days, of which we try to have many.

A teacher should not begrudge time spent in the country schools. Success in teaching must not be gauged by position or by salary, but by influence in uplifting lives. Many a teacher whose salary is but two or three hundred a year, is truly more successful than

others who receive as many thousand. The country school gives a blessed opportunity to store the mind with that deeper kind of natural science not gained alone from books, but largely from close contact with nature. Those who lack in real love for nature would do well to read Burroughs' "Pepacton", "Winter Sunshine", or "Birds and Poets", Wilson Flagg's "A Year Among the Trees", or Bradford Torrey's "Footpath Ways", and be inspired.

In all that is done throughout life, the ideal must stand firmly before us. "Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny."

One's lot in life should never be a stumbling block to his advancement; nothing can harm the person who is steadfast of purpose.

That lot in life—is it in a swamp? It should then be ditched, that all sloth and discouragements may pass off, leaving it worthy the home it might be. Is it barren or dry? It should then be irrigated with noble thoughts and aspirations; a grand and lasting structure should be reared upon that lot, the structure should be dedicated to some noble object, the life be given to that object: and life will henceforth be worth the living.

## II

### A PROGRAMME

It is a very delicate matter to advise a programme of life. However, it has been said there is only one thing we are perfectly willing to share with others and that is our opinion, so I will give mine, and the reader must reserve his judgment.

I have already spoken of the special studies in line with those in which the poorest school work is done. I also spoke of the experience method of child study, and its excellent results; of having some good book on psychology, that we may compare our judgments with those of wiser heads. In short, the mind should be made up as to what the year's study shall be, early in September; the study should begin October first, and end June first. This will give time to get fully settled in the school work before the study is begun, and it will be finished before the hot weather comes.

There is a teachers' professional course called the Chautauqua Teachers' Reading Union. It is a three years' course and three books are studied each year. The books are wisely chosen by the most eminent educational men in America. To join this union, a membership fee of fifty cents is paid for memoranda, certifi-

cates, postage, etc. At the end of each year, on receipt of the memoranda filled out, the member receives a certificate for that year's reading, and at the conclusion of the three years, a diploma is given, signed by the president of the department and the chancellor of the Chautauqua Circle. I can not say that this will be easy reading, but it will be invaluable knowledge; a thorough practical course with a definite purpose, which is professional advancement.

But some one will say, "I am too weary at night for solid reading." Please let me prescribe for that tired feeling. The prescription is this; put a sound mind in a sound body. The teacher is weary first for change of scene; good wholesome outdoor exercise is needed, and must be had, before attempting to read, or digest anything worthy of reading. To ride home in a street car filled with bad air, or to walk two or three blocks, drop into a chair, or on a couch in a dejected heap, and nurse weariness for an hour, and then attempt to study, this will never do. It would be better to take a long vigorous walk or a bicycle ride, in which to throw off all school cares, or to call upon some friend and have a pleasant chat. "We must not let the grass grow on the road of friendship," says Mille Clairon.

On returning home, take a bath and go to sleep. Every muscle should be relaxed, the bed should hold us, we should not try to hold ourselves. Nine-tenths

of the people in the world do not know how to sleep. It would be well to watch the baby, and follow his example. He gets all there is out of his sleep, and we should do the same. After a refreshing sleep, and in a comfortable attire we are ready to enjoy a good dinner, talk with our companions on the general topics of the day—not shop, look over the evening paper, if we happen to live where there is one, and by that time we are ready and anxious to study. One hour, or an hour and a half, if we feel fresh and wish to do so, is enough time to spend in solid study during the evening. At any rate, it is best to stop by ten o'clock and retire for the night. No teacher, in ordinary health, need retire before ten. One who follows this plan, will take up the evening study with real pleasure. Of course these hours will, now and then, be broken in upon, for the teacher, as well as others, has social duties; but social duties do not call one out every evening, or even every alternate evening: there are no such social duties. Society has no right to call for too much of our time; we must remember that we owe something to ourselves.

It is also the duty of every teacher to take one or two educational papers, and to read them, not merely let them accumulate as is too often done.

When shall they be read? One who is in bed by ten o'clock, or shortly after, at six in the morning has had

eight hours sleep. This is the regular amount required. Plenty of time should be taken for making the morning toilet. Much depends on beginning the day well. The cold, or lukewarm bath, followed by a good rubbing, is absolutely indispensable to the vigorous body and the vigorous mind. If half an hour is taken for the toilet, half an hour or more may then be spent with the educational journals. Some of the inspiring articles may be read upon the subject of the nature work, geography, history, or child study. Arnold of Rugby said that he preferred to have his pupils drink from a running stream rather than from a stagnant pool, meaning that he gave himself such daily preparation that all he taught was fresh to them. Here was the secret of his inspired teaching.

When the breakfast call comes I am sure there will be an appetite for breakfast. To be hearty and vigorous, one must eat proper food. Eggs that are soggy, or bread that is only half baked do not come under the head of proper food. If one finds such the general rule, some other home should be sought. In such things we have a right to be particular. Meals should be eaten at regular hours; we should eat then, and at no other time. Some of my friends keep the social box of bon-bons constantly before me when I visit them. This is an extravagant folly. Fresh fruit is well enough, but even this is much better eaten at meal time. Pastry

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does not contain enough nutriment to pay for the labor of chewing it, and could well be dispensed with.

Some part of Saturday and Sunday should be spent in reading the general topics of the day. I know of no better publication to depend upon year after year for these topics than the Chautauquan. The news one most desires is found there just full enough, just brief enough, to give a good condensed review of the situation. The articles are well written, and perfectly reliable. It is a magazine that all can afford, being but two dollars a year. I was first attracted to this magazine by a lady who was always well informed on every topic of general news. As I never saw many papers or magazines lying about in her house, I once asked her where she obtained her information. "I read only the Chautauquan," was the reply. If one lives in a place where there is a public library, it is a good plan to spend some evening during the week among the periodicals there. In the Review of Reviews will be found a review of the contents of each of the best publications. If one looks first at this to find out where the particular articles desired, may be found, much time is saved. If one lives in a small village, or in the country where access to a public library can not be had, perhaps a magazine club can be formed, in which each member takes some standard publication, and these can be passed around. It is a mistake to take

too many. Four is all that can possibly be managed in a month, with the other reading one should do.

Two or three times a year, a teacher should take pains to go where the latest educational books are kept, and spend some time among them, that he may know what books are best, and what to purchase whenever books are needed. The next best thing to knowing, is knowing where to find out.

Once in two or three years, it is a good plan to invest a few dollars in Soule's photographs. These are photographs of the world's finest pictures, and are an art education in themselves.

Vacation comes at last, and we all look forward to it with real pleasure. It is that delightful "leisure for learning", and not a false motion should be made.

For the first three or four weeks of the vacation, the weary teacher should find the quietest, cosiest nook possible, drink fresh milk, eat plain, wholesome food, relax and sleep until rested in body and mind. There should be boating, bathing, cycling, and a comfortable hammock.

This is the time to read the dear, delightful novel that the busy year's work has excluded; the good novel of literary value, not the latest trash. Emerson's rule is a good one:—"Never read any book that is not a year old." Often the new books which are recommended one year are entirely forgotten the next year,

and it is a waste of time and brain tissue to read them. But there are such novels as "David Copperfield", "Bleak House", "Ivanhoe", "Guy Mannering", "Mill on the Floss", "Romola", "Lorna Doone" and many others of real educational value. There are Hawthorne's works, of which the Americans are so justly proud; and coming closer to our own time are the books of Sarah Orne Jewett, Constance Fenimore Woolson, George Egbert Craddock, James Lane Allen, and many others.

Sometimes a novel, comparatively new, possesses real merit, but let everyone be careful in choosing. "Every book that we take up without a purpose is an opportunity lost for taking up a book with a purpose." The good novel brings us into closer knowledge and sympathy with our fellow beings, and is part of a well rounded culture. The best are those in which we lose ourselves, and live in the lives of the characters portrayed.

Some of the best biographers are excellent vacation reading; as "Life and Correspondence of Doctor Arnold", "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay", or the life of George Eliot.

While among the trees, it is a good time to read Wilson Flagg's, "A Year among the Trees", with Apgar's or Newhall's "Trees of Northeastern United States" for reference, that the trees may be known, and their

motions, shapes, and voices, of which Mr. Flagg speaks, may be noted.

Cocoons, butterflies, moths, birds, and squirrels may also be studied in their own environments, on delightful morning rambles, and collections may be made. With Flagg's "*A Year with the Birds*", one may lie in a hammock, and listen to the birds and often know them by their songs as the author has written them in his book.

During the first or second week in July, the National Educational Association meets. All who attend these meetings will find them exceedingly profitable. Meeting the great lights of the educational world is alone an inspiration, hearing them speak is a greater one, and having a conversation with one is a still greater inspiration. To meet and to converse with cultured, educational people from all parts of our country, are real privileges.

In connection with these meetings are the inexpensive trips to different parts of the country near the place of meeting, of which one may take advantage, thereby learning valuable lessons in geography, history, and geology. Perhaps a mountain may be climbed, or some noted cave or waterfall be visited, thus gaining pleasant memories for years to come. A trip on the great lakes, through the mountains, or up the Hudson is a never ceasing inspiration. These trips will be

lived over and over again in the geography class, year by year, giving pleasure to both pupils and teacher. Nothing pleases children quite so well as real experiences in these lines.

The summer schools usually open in August. We all realize their value, and we all know how unwise it is to try to grasp everything on the programme. Two or three studies, at most, are all that it is wise to undertake, as the weather is so apt to be warm and sultry.

Perhaps a school situated in the mountains or at the seashore might warrant a little more work, but it is hardly safe to undertake more.

While enjoying the vacation, it would be well to decide upon some line of study for the coming year, and make out a programme, for to accomplish anything in this life we must use our time wisely.

### III

## READING

Much attention has been paid of late to nature study, primary geography, literature lessons, and number. These are all important subjects, but the most important study in the primary and intermediate grades is, to-day and always, reading. Why? That we may train up elocutionists to entertain or distract the public? No. In after years elocution may be an aim, but never in the public schools.

Reading is a study of primary importance in our schools because through it most of our after-knowledge comes; through it we teach the child to become competent to help himself. The work of the public school teacher is to train up thought-getters, not elocutionists. To train up intelligent, thoughtful silent readers should be our aim in teaching reading. "Reading maketh a full man," says Bacon, and we know that with this reading habit well directed, the child's education is, in a great measure, secure.

To become a thought-getter involves:—

First.—A thorough knowledge of form.

Second.—An understanding of the meaning.

Third.—Power to enter into the spirit of the author.

For the first, the drudgery of teaching reading, we should employ our best talent. Our wise educators understand the truth of this statement, but it is still generally thought that anyone can teach the little children. Think a moment; would a wise man consider anyone competent to lay the foundation for his new block with its many stories of offices? How then can any intelligent person argue that it is well to trust the foundation work of the children, whose characters are to reach into the eternal realm where God dwells, to clumsy, unskilled workman? This first work is the formation period in so many ways that we must have none but the best teachers here.

What is involved in this form-knowledge, this mechanical part of teaching reading? First we must teach accurate seeing. For this purpose it seems best to begin with words or sentences. The word method begins with nouns representing objects that have been placed before the children. The children are taught these words as wholes. The sentence method deals with the thought, and the sentence as a representation of the thought is seen as a whole. The children are taught to know these symbols at sight, by seeing them often, by comparison, and by reproducing them in different ways. As soon as a sufficient number of words or sentences are learned to make a connected thought, or group of connected thoughts, the children

are taught to read. Having learned to see the words and sentences as wholes, they are now able to read with expression. They also begin to see for what they are aiming, and become anxious to read, which is one of the first points to be gained. They must also be taught to get the ideas of form through the ear by means of phonics. There is a great deal of nonsense in the teaching of phonics, but when properly taught there is no way more helpful in teaching children to be independent in reading. If we drop all the nonsense in phonics and combine the word, sentence, and phonic methods, we shall have something on which to build. Unless a teacher has a good, systematic plan which she thoroughly understands, she may make poor spellers by using phonics too much. This is what Mrs. Pollard and Elizabeth Fundenberg wish to guard against. They have both given us valuable works. Miss Fundenberg's simple rules for spelling any child may learn and apply at an early age.

Word-building by families is also an important part of phonic drill and form study, but we have not yet come to the most important use of phonics. We will speak of that later.

The hand must also help in fixing form. At first the child may lay sticks or lentels on a large script or printed word; later he may write the word or sentence. The teacher should require all written words to be clear

and plain; the best work of the child. Careless work means careless seeing, and careless seeing means incorrect knowledge of form. A noted educator of this country, D. L. Kiehle of the Minnesota University, said of vertical writing, "This kind of writing will never cover up poor spelling." It will never do to allow a child to attain this accomplishment. Careful written work is a powerful factor in the study of form.

This part of the work is the mechanical side of teaching reading, but this does not comprise the whole of the first work. Teaching children to comprehend the meaning of what they read and to enter into the spirit of the author is often a real pleasure. To see the light of intelligence come into the little upturned faces, to be with the children when they first begin to realize that the board lesson or the printed page is theirs and that through it they may enter into a new realm, are pleasures not given to any but the teacher of the beginners. For instance, Johnny tells something about the rabbit he has brought to school. The teacher says, "I will show you what you have told me, and I will do it with this chalk." When it is written Johnny reads it. Strictly speaking, this is not reading; it is teaching the child what reading means, making him anxious to read, and is a very important lesson at first. It is also a foundation for expression. The child who has a few such lessons will be less apt to read, "My—

rabbit—has—soft—fur.” He will have learned to enter into the spirit of what he reads.

As the children grow in reading, and are able to get the meaning in a measure for themselves, we may question for the story or thought in a lesson, or have the children tell what they have read. Just a few hints about questioning. In the Stickney’s third reader there is a story entitled, “How a Butterfly Came.” Questions might be asked as follows:—“At what time of the year did this happen? What did a lady see one day? How long was it? What color was it?” etc., through the entire story; or a child might be called upon to tell the story, which he would probably give in a few confused sentences amounting to nothing.

A better plan would be to say to the children the day the lesson was assigned: “Look at this picture of a caterpillar, and this queer picture beneath, and then look at the picture of the pretty butterfly on the next page. Your lesson to-morrow tells us that this butterfly came in some way from the caterpillar. The story explains this, and you may write me a letter telling just how it happens, and make me understand.”

In following this plan, two things are accomplished:—worthless matter is cast out, and the habit of accuracy is brought into training. This plan should not be used with every lesson, as that would make the work monotonous, but the idea will be suggestive. Some of

the stories found in our readers, unfortunately, have no point to be brought out. A teacher should not feel obliged to use such literature simply because it is in the reader, but should spend the time on something of value.

It is an easy matter to get some children to enter into the spirit of the author. Only interest them in what they have to do, and get them to acquire the habit of attention, and it is accomplished. No teacher can get children to enter into the spirit of the author unless she herself can do it. It is often hard for the teacher to follow kitty after a mouse, play soldier with Johnny, or suffer with piggy caught in the fence, but it must be done or all is lost.

The silent reading habit is of primary importance; it comes first in all the efforts of the child to help himself, and is most used in after life; but oral reading holds a very important place in the school and in after life. Silent reading means self-improvement or self-enjoyment and is selfish of itself, but oral reading is giving thought and pleasure to others, is unselfish in its motive, and should therefore receive proper attention. It deals with:—

First—Study of form.

Second—Power to grasp the meaning.

Third—Power to enter into the spirit of the author.

Fourth—Clear enunciation.

Fifth—Power so to modulate the voice as to show shades of meaning.

The first three have been discussed. To the study of form this thought might be added for oral reading; the children should be taught to read ahead; they should be taught to grasp a whole sentence at a time, and present it without looking at the book, in a comprehensive manner. After that they may be taught to read glancing up from the book as they read. The teacher may ask the children to read to her or to the class until this habit is formed. Each child may come before the class as he reads and feel that he is really entertaining them, or trying to make them see and feel the meaning of what he reads.

To teach distinct enunciation and well modulated tones we must use phonics. This is the true function of the phonic drill. The children must be taught how to place the vocal organs, and how to use them to the best advantage. They should be taught to get ready to speak, to use the lips and the lower jaw. They should pronounce all difficult or new words in the lesson, getting well ready before they utter them.

Shades of meaning can only come through proper use of phonics, through power to grasp the meaning and to enter into the spirit of the author.

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## IV

### A PLAN FOR TEACHING READING

In giving this general plan for teaching reading, it must not be understood that it is presented as the only correct plan, or even the best one, but simply as a good plan aiming at thoroughness and independence, on the part of the children. To the wise teacher all plans are suggestive; nothing is adopted, everything is adapted.

First,—Assign a definite lesson.

Children should be held responsible for some work in every lesson from the beginning of school life. It is a great help to a teacher to have a lesson so definitely planned that he is able to explain fully and clearly just what he wishes done. A lesson so planned is not likely to be a failure.

Second,—Require the children to prepare that lesson, and know that it is prepared.

Until the habit of study is acquired the children should be given something tangible to do. They should be required to hand in some work on slates or on paper. The smallest children may have the work upon their desks. For instance, the children may write a list of words beginning with a certain sound,

or belonging to a certain family; as, words ending with  
ight, age, ill, tion.

Write all the questions in the lesson.

Write all the quotations.

Write all the words having two syllables.

Write all the words having the accent on the first  
syllable.

Write all the proper names.

Write the answer to some question involving the cen-  
tral thought in the lesson.

Write all the words they are unable to find out for  
themselves.

The last named exercise is a great help to the teacher  
in the class preparation.

Third,—Have class preparation before the reading.

The children should never be allowed to come to a  
reading class and stumble along in a slipshod, haphaz-  
ard way. Oral reading is thought-giving, and the chil-  
dren should be made to feel that unless they are giving  
thought to others in a clear, comprehensive manner  
they are not reading.

There are a great many good methods of conducting  
the class preparation; two are here outlined.

The children may read silently, asking the teacher  
any words they do not know or can not find out alone.

It is better not to have these words spelled, as we  
wish the children to see words as wholes. They may

indicate the word by pointing it out and the teacher will usually be able to tell which it is by the position on the page; or they may say, "The seventh word in the third line," or "The fourth word in the second paragraph." The difficult word should not be pronounced for the child; he should be helped to help himself in some such way as this:—"That *a* has the short sound and the *e* is silent," or he may be led to see the syllables and to put them together so as to pronounce the word for himself. The words should be placed upon the board as the children pronounce them, and there should be drill upon these words at the conclusion of the silent reading, that they may be well fixed in the memory. Some children will get through much sooner than others. What shall be done with them? They may be praised for this, and asked to re-read the lesson thinking how they will make the class understand the meaning. When all have finished, or when the time is nearly up, there should be drill upon the new words upon the board,—not the spelling, but the word pictures, meaning, pronunciation, and enunciation. Diacritical marks should not be used in this drill. The children do not find them in the reading lesson, and the object is to give vivid word pictures. It may be necessary to use these marks while the child is finding out the word, but after the word is mastered

it should be erased and written without them, that the last impression may be that of the word as it is.

In following this plan the responsibility is placed upon the children. They are made to feel that if there is any word upon which they stumble in the reading lesson the fault is entirely their own.

Another good plan is this. The teacher may make a list of words considered to be the difficult ones, or the words may be selected from the lists handed in by the children, as suggested, in their own preparation. These words may be written on the board, one by one; the children may find them in the story, and read the sentences in which they are found. If they can not pronounce them they should be helped, as suggested. They will more readily see the meaning of the word by the context. They may then read the lesson, paragraph by paragraph, silently. As each is read they may close the books and be required to tell in good language what they have read. The chief value of these exercises, it will be readily seen, is that they teach the children how to study.

Occasionally it is a good plan to read the lesson to the children as impressively as possible, at the conclusion of the class preparation, to give them ideals of good reading.

Fourth,—Children read the lesson orally.

It is the best general plan to have every child take

active part in the oral reading lesson, but occasionally for variety several children may read the whole lesson to the class standing before them. Each child should be required to read silently during every recitation; he will then get much from the reading exercise whether he participates actively or not. We should not allow children to criticize each other in the old fashioned way, "He left out *it*," or "He put in *to*," or "He reads too fast." This is time wasted, and it often creates ill feeling and sometimes takes away the little confidence a timid child may have. If criticisms are allowed they may be for the failure to get the meaning or to hear distinctly, and should be given in a kindly spirit.

If an inattentive child stumbles, or fails to know the words on which he has had good, thorough drill, he should be made to feel that it is because he has failed to pay attention during that drill; and he should be required to remain after school and do his work alone. As the reading lesson proceeds, the teacher should take note of any extra drill needed as, "*jew*" for *do you*, "*jest*" for *just*, "*wite*" for *white*, "*comin'*" for *coming*, or any other incorrect pronunciation. These should be drilled upon at the close of the lesson, not while the class are reading, as we wish the children's minds to be centred on the thought alone at this time. Any lack of emphasis or any incorrect expression show-

ing that the meaning is not clear should be talked of during the recitation period.

With the little ones who are not conscious of themselves, it is comparatively easy to get the spirit of the author, and to get shades of meaning brought out properly, but when the children are diffident, awkward, and painfully conscious of themselves, it is much more difficult. The wise teacher will work carefully, get the confidence of the children, praise the good, kindly criticize the bad, and success will attend such efforts.

Much may be accomplished in this line through the gems of literature that may be presented to the class. No matter how large the school, or how many classes there are, ten or fifteen minutes should be spent daily in presenting real literature to the children. This time may be spent in teaching a memory gem, either prose or poetry, in reading to them, or in having some good reader among them do so. It is a good plan to have these readings in line with the general work, nature study, geography, temperance, or history, when it is possible to find suitable material that is real literature, but the correlation should never be forced; it should be natural and thoughtful or it should be abandoned. This does not, however, excuse any teacher from searching diligently for the right material.

While studying the New England States "Boston Town", by Scudder, "Spectacles for Young Eyes",

by Butterworth, "Paul Revere's Ride", or "The Great Stone Face", by Hawthorne may be used with profit. With the temperance lesson the children may be taught Longfellow's "The Builders", Alex. Smart's "Better Than Gold", or Alice Cary's "A Receipt for an Appetite". The first chapter of Daniel is a pleasing and profitable story to be used in connection with the study of the best food. Abundant material can always be found for correlating nature study and history.

A teacher must make thorough preparation for these afternoon readings: better in fact, than he would consider it necessary to make were he to go before the most distinguished audience; for he is building for the children ideals that will either rear themselves grandly or fall in ruin.

Every morning there should be time given for the recitation of short quotations which the children have learned. I saw such a simple and beautiful exercise of this kind given in a first primary room not long ago. One child after another arose and gave his morning offering. "Always speak the truth." "The bravest are the tenderest, the loving are the daring." "Cheerful words make each dish a feast." "It is better to be than to seem." "Dare to do right, dare to be true." "The hand of the giver is ever above that of the receiver." "Of all music, that which reaches

farthest into heaven is the beating of a loving heart." These children, although they came from some of the humblest homes in the city, seemed so bright and happy in this exercise and seemed so well to understand and appreciate the truth and beauty in these quotations that I could but think of the words of Epictetus, " If a man is unhappy, it must be his own fault: for God made all men to be happy."

## V

## CORRELATION

Somewhere I have read the legendary story that when building the first and finest temple at Jerusalem, all the stones were prepared in the mountains of Lebanon and brought to the temple area ready for use. One day a very curiously shaped stone was brought, having many faces. It seemed that the one who fashioned it had tried to see how peculiar he could make it. As it appeared to fit nowhere, it was ridiculed and cast aside in an out-of-the-way corner. Weeds grew over it and there it lay for thirty years. Finally the builders came in their work to a place in a corner where no stone would fit. It was a conspicuous place and they became anxious and discouraged. An aged workman, remembering the rejected stone, unearthed it, and lo! it fell into the vacant place a perfect fit, while all the people shouted: "The stone which the builders refused has become the headstone of the corner."

Those who ridicule and reject correlation of studies will, sooner or later, find it "the stone which the builders refused".

Most of the reforms of to-day have been subjected to this fate when first presented. If a method or any new departure is a "fad", it will soon die a natural death,—there need be no fear about that; but if it is worthy of

living, all we can say against it will not kill it. Only let us be thoughtful and earnest in all we do, and we can not stray far from the right path. I know the trouble; it is the nonsensical work that always follows a new method, like a mob that follows a strike.

It is not the first object of correlation to bring the work about one centre, nor does it mean, necessarily, that all the work during the day shall be about the same thing, but it simply means bringing the child into psychological relation to the world around him ; showing him the interdependence of things; how we do not live for ourselves alone; and how to find beauty and use in all things. It is teaching the child to educate himself.

Studies can not be isolated and do their best work for the child. One must be made to strengthen another.

A typical day in the past, and one that I have cause to remember, was as follows:—

Reading—"The Sale of the Pet Lamb." (Sanders' Third Reader).

#### Spelling—

phase,	cough,	nephew,	sulphur,
phiz,	tough,	pamphlet,	triumph,
sphere,	rough,	prophet,	seraph,
phlegm,	laugh,	camphor,	graphic,
sphinx,	cipher,	camphene,	telegraph,
nymph,	physic,	morphine,	autograph.

—Swinton's *Word Book*.

Language—Write the plurals of

man,	sheep,	goose,
heathen,	child,	genus,
ox,	deer,	valley.
money,		

Use each in a sentence in the possessive form.

Geography—Name and bound the countries of South America.

Writing—Copy, “ Honesty is the best policy.”

I only wish our copy books of to-day had some of these good, old-fashioned copies.

I do not remember about the arithmetic lesson, but presume it was abstract work in long division.

Music and drawing had no place on that programme, though we did sing some fine songs during the opening exercises. This I call a day in the past. Would it be impossible to find such a day now ?

One September morning as I was walking to school with a teacher whom I particularly admire, we noticed that the air was full of winged seeds, dandelion, thistle, etc.

“ What a good way to begin the teaching of how seeds are scattered,” she remarked thoughtfully. On entering her room she found that the milk-weed pods hanging near the window had burst, and that the room was alive with winged seeds. The children were ready

for their lesson. They first recited Helen Hunt Jackson's autumn poem:

“ The golden rod is yellow  
And the corn is turning brown,  
The trees in apple orchards  
With fruit are bending down.

“ The gentian’s bluest fringes  
Are curling in the sun,  
In dusty pods the milk-weed  
Her hidden silk has spun.

“ The sedges flaunt their harvest  
In every meadow nook,  
And asters by the brookside  
Make asters in the brook.

“ By all these lovely tokens  
September days are here,  
With summer’s best of weather  
And autumn’s best of cheer.”

The matter for the general work in this series of lessons was as follows:—

Some seeds are scattered by the wind, some by water, some by birds and animals, some by boat and some by cars. Man scatters some in planting.

These ideas were brought out by judicious questions, and made vivid by the examination of the different seeds to see how some were constructed so that the

wind could carry them, why the water could carry others, why some clung to animals, and how some were carried by birds.

Now was the story "Seedlings on the Wing", by Andrea Hofer, out of place or a waste of time? Was it an indiscreet selection for a reproduction language lesson, first oral and then written; or would it have been better, at this time, to have asked the children to select subjects and predicates in a long list of sentences? Would it be a bad plan to read from Thoreau's "Succession of Forests", especially what he says of the squirrel that buried the acorns and forgot to unearth them, or met some sad fate, and being left, they sprouted and grew where no oaks had grown before? Would the reading of that famous chapter on weeds by Burroughs be out of place in the school-room at this time?

Perhaps this teacher made a mistake in having her class draw the seeds in which they were so much interested during the drawing period, instead of having the children draw a square on its diagonals. Perhaps she should have spent all of the music period on the key of A, instead of devoting half of the time to teaching the song beginning,

. " Little seeds now must thou go,  
To thy still cold bed below."

But I think not, and I am sure the teachers of drawing and music will agree with me.

I present here some of the spelling diction exercises which the children studied and wrote.

Our milk-weed pods have burst open. Many seeds came out and were carried away on the wind. Soon they will fall to the ground and lie asleep until the spring sunshine and rain waken them.

Birds scatter seeds. Willie Smith said this morning, "I saw a bird dropping seeds from a head of plantain which it carried in its beak."

Miss Arnold says, "Sparrows are little grain elevators. They often carry grain up in the air in their beaks and drop it in places where it sprouts and grows."

Here is a little maple seed. It has a wing with which to fly. It can not fly far, but it can get out from under the mother tree's shade where it can get warm sunshine. Then it will sprout and grow.

The linden seed has a queer wing. It looks something like a long, slender raft. It is lighter green than the leaf, and the seed is fastened to the midrib at about the centre. With this wing it can fly short distances or float on the water.

It will, I think, be readily seen from these exercises that there is a natural method of teaching punctuation, possessives, plurals, paragraphing, and other essentials of written language.

In most school readers of the present day, suitable

literature is provided for correlating with nature study, and this should be used no matter in what part of the reader it is found. The day for commencing at the first page and reading through the book in regular order, without regard to other work, is past. In the first grade this material may not be as readily found, but the blackboard always affords opportunity for these lessons.

Such a series of lessons as I have described will probably take two or three days, using the general lesson, language, reading, and spelling periods.

Now what has been gained in such a series of lessons?

1. Power of observation.
2. Power of expression oral and written.
3. An idea of the dependence of one thing on another (the correlation of nature we might call it).
4. The idea of the adaptation of parts to their use.
5. An added vocabulary.
6. A poem from standard literature memorized.
7. Valuable information.
8. The children have been brought into closer relations with nature, and to see the beauty and use in the common things of life.

One day a moth came out of its winter cradle and sat upon the edge of the window-sill to rest. It was greeted with shouts of joy from the children who saw

it and who had been long waiting for something to come from that cradle.

Did that teacher go on quietly with the study of the cotton-wood twig upon which she had begun a lesson? No; she was too wise for that. She immediately laid it aside for future use and then and there introduced the beautiful stranger. "Children, this is a Promethia Moth. Now you may ask questions about it." Here are some of their questions.

- "How did it get in there?"
- "How did it get out?"
- "Are its wings wet?"
- "Was there water in its cradle?"
- "What is the name of its cradle?"
- "What is the cradle made of?"
- "Is it hungry?"
- "What did it eat when it was in the cocoon?"
- "How long has it been there?"
- "Where will it go now?"
- "Are those feathers on its head?"
- "What are they for?"
- "Can it see us?"

Some of these questions the teacher answered, some she frankly confesseed she could not answer but said she would find out, some she let the children come and find out for themselves by observation, some she asked them to think about during the day.

All that day they observed the moth; they were allowed to go and watch it whenever their lessons were finished, and groups of children were almost constantly around it.

When language period came they were asked to tell what they had learned for themselves. And what had they learned?

There were three parts to its body. The names, head, thorax, and abdomen were given and written upon the board. As these children had previously studied the ant, they decided that the moth, like the ant, must be an insect. On its head were feelers that looked like plumes. The eyes were like small black beads. On the thorax were six legs and four wings; the wings were reddish brown with darker spots. When the moth was resting, its wings were spread out wide. There were rings on the body and the legs were jointed. The wings were covered with something that looked like dust.

At the drawing period the moth had its portrait drawn. While drawing the children were allowed to go near it occasionally that they might draw truthfully. They were careful to place the legs and wings on the thorax and to place the right number of rings on the thorax and abdomen.

The next day was spent in gaining new knowledge of the habits and life history of the moth. From

what it came and how the cocoon was spun. Why it was called a moth instead of a butterfly. The eyes were examined through a microscope and the lenses explained. The teacher also explained that the legs of the moth or butterfly are the first six legs of the caterpillar, called the true legs, and that the other legs of the caterpillar, called the false or prolegs, wither away and disappear during the long sleep. The inside of the cocoon was examined, and the children discovered why the wings were wet. They were then asked to put together what they had learned, and the full description was given.

At story period "The Green Worm", by G. Annie Raymond, was read. This story, it will be remembered, gives the life history of the moth in a very pleasing manner.

The chapters "Butterflies and Moths" and "The Silk Worm", from Monteith's "Living Creatures of Water, Land and Air", were also read. I give one suggestive spelling lesson.

The moth does not eat during the cocoon state, but the caterpillar or larva is so greedy that it lays up a store of fat to feed the pupa until it comes into the new life.

The caterpillar eats so much that its skin becomes too small for it six times, and splits open in the back

and falls off. The moth comes out of the cocoon full grown; it is called the imago.

caterpillar,	larva,	greedy,
cocoon,	pupa,	during,
moth,	imago,	becomes.

Now I wonder if anyone thinks such correlated lessons are failures, and that hit-and-miss work is preferable.

All stories or poems used should be those which teach some useful lesson on the lives, habits or homes of these animals or plants; no literature should be used simply because the subject studied is mentioned. We must never teach anything unless we have a good reason for doing so. We must feel sure that we are making the children wiser and better by everything we teach.

Will the lesson on the apple be in any wise strengthened by the story of William Tell? And yet it is used in this connection.

I do not believe in correlating arithmetic with the other studies. I have seen some good work in this line, and I have seen much more that was very bad. A forced correlation, as I have before said, is a waste of time, so let us use good judgment in this matter.

When October comes, shall we not teach "October's Bright Blue Weather"; and later in the autumn,

“ November ” and “ Faded Leaves ” or “ Down to Sleep ? ”

Correlation of the children with their environment, Prof. O’Shea calls this kind of work.

The child who has been taught in this way will soon begin to bring to school stories, poems, and other literature relating to his work which he has read and in which he is interested. This is where the chief value comes to him. He is learning to educate himself. This habit will grow on him year by year, until the correlation of nature, literature, life, and God is complete.

## VI

### GEOGRAPHY

The great purpose in teaching geography is, during the first years, insight into life both plant and animal, as affected by physical environment. Nearly all of what is termed nature study is really geography.

The first years of school work in this subject should be given to the rudiments of physical geography, if we allow the child to lead us, for this is decidedly his choice.

The things in which he is interested and to the touch of which his life responds are : the changes which take place as the seasons change, traceries of the frost and forms of snowflakes, cloud pictures—he knows nothing of cumulus, nimbus, or stratus by name, but he can describe and draw them all—, the relation of fog and vapor to the clouds, why the rain-cloud is dark, why moisture gathers on the pitcher when it is about to rain, the journey of the rain-drops to the sea, forms of land and water, the flight of the birds, habits of animals, and plant and animal life in the valley as compared with that on the mountain.

Upon these subjects he can talk, and talk intelligently. Better still, he will be able to find out many

of these things for himself by observation and experiment. For instance, he may hang a curtain out of the window on a foggy day, and find that it is soon wet, proving that the atmosphere is full of moisture; he may measure a quantity of water and set it on a hot stove, or on a radiator, and measuring it again the following day, find that it has lost in quantity, showing that evaporation has taken place; or he may learn by setting water out of doors on a cold day that freezing expands it. The story "What broke the China Pitcher", by Sara Wiltse, may be used in making this clear.

As the child proceeds in the subject of geography, he begins to deal more particularly with the people on the earth, and to make a study of their lives as affected by physical conditions; to make a study of the earth as the home of man. At this stage the globe, not maps, should be presented to him (a relief globe is much more effective), that he may first know the earth as a ball in space and make a brief study of its relations to the sun. He may then take up the positions of the zones. These should be taught as belts of climate with a brief study of the reasons for the difference in the climate. The child can not understand this scientifically yet, and to spend much time on it would be time wasted. The study should be particularly the lives of the people who inhabit these zones; also the different

people inhabiting the same zone, with the reasons for their different manners and customs.

The most effective way of taking up this work, is by reading or relating stories of the lives of the common people living in these zones. The child should give back these stories in his own language both orally and written.

I can recommend five very valuable books to use in connection with this work. They are: "Seven Little Sisters," "Each and All", and "Ten Boys Who Lived on the Road from Long Ago to Now", the three by Jane Andrews, "Our World," by Mrs. Mary Hall, and "Child Life in many Lands," by Doctor Strong. The last named book is particularly valuable, being written by a missionary whose insight into the real life of the people is marked.

A whole year could be profitably spent with these books. At first very little should be said about the countries lying within the different zones, but after the child has gained a general knowledge of the climate and people, he may take imaginary journeys on the globe to the countries he is to talk about. Distances should be spoken of mainly by days of travel, as miles means so little to the child, especially to the child who is born and bred in the city. Modes of travel should be clearly pictured.

As the different countries are studied, poems, and stories relating to these countries which are adapted to foster in the mind their peculiarities should be read or related. For instance: the study of Holland is greatly strengthened by reading "A Leak in the Dike", by Phœbe Cary, "Rollo in Holland", by Jacob Abbot, or "Hans Brinker", by Mary Mapes Dodge; life in Switzerland, by reading "Jeanette", in "Seven Little Sisters", and life in Greenland by reading Schwatka's "Children of the Cold".

It is also a good plan to take up, in connection with the lives of the common people of the country, the life of some hero of that country, that the children may see what ideals the people have; as, Gustavus Adolphus for Norway and Sweeden, Wallace or Bruce for Scotland, William Tell or the story of the Swiss Guards and the Lion of Saint Marks for Switzerland, Joan of Arc for France, and Washington or Lincoln for the United States.

Nothing is of more value in geography work than pictures. Pictures will often make the child understand what he can not understand by descriptions no matter how graphic.

I remember once trying vainly for fifteen minutes to make some children understand what was meant by irrigation. They showed plainly by their questions, and by the expression on their faces that they neither

understood nor felt interested. In the Northern Pacific railroad office I found some pictures of the irrigated gardens and fields of the Yakima Valley in eastern Washington. These I brought to the class, on the following day, and showed to the children. The light at once began to dawn in their faces.

At another time these children read in their geographies that in New Hampshire there were beds of red sandstone. In the class recitation one child told me, and most of the rest agreed, that in New Hampshire the people made their beds of red sandstone. A picture of one of these quarries was shown, the sand stone beds were pointed out, and the matter was soon satisfactorily clear.

Any teacher can make collections of useful pictures and group them with reference to some zone, country, or section of country. These may be pasted, according to some logical sequence, upon sheets of manila or even common express paper, and the sheets be fastened together with moulding or weather strips as the pages of a music or reading chart are fastened. This chart may be hung upon an easel so that the sheets may be turned over the back of it. It will be something which will save much time, and be a constant source of pleasure to the children. I have also seen charts of this kind made, showing the noted pictures and statuary of a country, with the pictures of the artists

and sculptors. I remember such a beautiful one of the madonnas of the different countries. Think what an education this is for the children!

After a year's outlook on the world as a whole, studied by climatic belts, the detailed study of the continent should be taken up, making a thorough study of physical features. This can be best done by using sand or relief maps. Such portions of physical and mathematical geography as the children can comprehend, should be brought in as they are needed in connection with the subject studied; as, uses of mountains, winds and currents and their causes and effect on the climate and productions, the relation of the sun to the earth and to other planets, soil formation, glaciers, drainage by river systems, etc. The child should be encouraged to read for himself along these lines.

The detailed study of the political divisions with their history, government, commercial relations, and dependencies should come next, making a thorough study of the people and the current events. The children will now be able to do much outside reading, and a list of the best books on these subjects should be kept where it can be referred to at any time in choosing books from the library. There should also be a comparison of the countries regarding latitude, climate, productions, and people.

Lastly there should be a scientific study of Physical Geography. Not until the mind has a good, general development can this be appreciated.

## VII

### SAND MODELING

#### ITS PURPOSES AND LEGIMATE USE

I do not propose to discuss at length the psychological principles which govern sand modelling. The principal reasons I have for recommending it as a device for presenting geography in the primary grades are:

First—It promotes the self-activity and interest of the child.

Second—It gives him another avenue for expression, one in which he may express his thoughts when words fail him.

Third—It makes clear, thorough touch, those ideas which he has gained but partially by sight.

Fourth—It shows the teacher the workings of the child's mind, pointing out vividly his concepts, both false and true, and enables the teacher to correct the one and to confirm the other. Many times we think a child understands a thing until he tries to reproduce it, when the mistake is brought out. Words often but smother ideas; this kind of expression is frank and open.

Sand modeling has been criticised as dead and life-

less in the main, as neither light and shade nor color can be here produced. It may be dead and lifeless, or living and animated, according to the way it is presented and the use made of it.

Sand modeling has been first used in primary geography in presenting forms of land and water. Should a form, as an island or a peninsula, be modeled and studied from the sand table? No; first the real form should be studied from nature. The field lesson and sand modeling go hand in hand; they can not be separated.

Now I know someone is thinking: "How can the real form be shown when there is none in the vicinity?" Out in front of the school-house, after a heavy rainfall, may be found, almost without fail, the lake, river, peninsula, island, cape, bay, etc. In any open field may be found the plain, prairie, hill, mountain, or valley. Oftentimes the school-yard is a little continent in miniature, so there is an end to that difficulty. Field lessons do not necessarily mean long journeys; many of the most profitable ones may be given in the school-yard or near the school-house.

Is it best to gain the definitions of these natural divisions in the field lesson? No; for the work is not yet thorough. The children should have time to assimilate the ideas as they are carefully questioned. Every field lesson should have a direct point, and that

point should be brought out forcibly. If a class goes out to see capes they should see capes, but they should not fail to see and review any form previously studied, if such form presents itself. Having seen the cape and talked about it in the field lesson, the children should, on the following day (each child having his own modeling tin at his own desk), model their own conception of the cape as seen in nature. The teacher, passing around the class, can then correct any false idea that may have crept in, and draw from the children a definition, the ideas being now ready.

It is not necessary that all give the same definition, though this is not objectionable; it is often the safest plan. I think, however, that any true definition given in good English should be accepted. Some of us are in that state of mind where we think it is a mistake to teach definitions of any kind; indeed, I sometimes think we are fast growing to feel that it is a sin to teach anything definitely. In order to escape one rut, do not let us fall into another.

A definition evolved after seeing in the field lesson and modeling in the class-room should be a good one, for it is one that will remain in the memory throughout life, being not words merely, but a picture seen through words, a fact that the child has worked out by his own self activity. That he may not see all capes alike he should be shown pictures of different

kinds, and should model the promontory. He should know of the capes most noted through literature as real places that he may sometimes see. For instance, he may know of the home of the Acadians and of Blomidon.

From the first study of land and water forms, a relief globe should be before the children, and they should understand that all the forms they are studying are to be found upon the great ball upon which they live. They should be allowed to point out islands, peninsulas, lakes, rivers, mountains, etc., from time to time.

The best primary geography class I have ever seen was one in a school situated near enough to Minnehaha Falls to enable the children to visit often the glen below the falls. Here almost all forms of land and water are presented. There are the brook basin, the cañon, the valley, the river, lakes, capes, bays, swamps, islands, etc. There are also the cliff, precipice, and waterfall. About a quarter of a mile below the falls the creek empties into the Mississippi river, giving the idea of tributary. The class I speak of took with them into the glen, each time they visited it, their modeling tins and their note-books. There with nature they observed and modeled these forms, made their definitions and wrote them in their note-books. They had several lessons on some of these divisions. They studied the fertile island, the desert island, and the

rocky island. Sitting on mossy seats in the cool shade they listened while the teacher read to them of the wonderful little builders under the sea, and of their structures, the coral islands. They were shown a picture of an atoll, and each modeled one. They also studied the little Samoa island girl, and reproduced her home on a large sand table. Selections were also read from "*Armored of Lyonese*". Here was the beginning of advanced work, which must be carried on largely through the imagination.

When this class modeled a valley they used silver tinsel for brooks and rivers, mirrors of irregular shapes for lakes, pebbles for buildings, toothpicks for fencing in farms and for building bridges, and sprays of evergreen and myrtle for trees and shrubs. Things were out of proportion to be sure, but through these symbols the children saw the real valley.

I have been much interested this fall in watching a series of lessons given in a primary class on "*Robinson Crusoe*". The children have represented Crusoe's island on a large sand table. The shipwreck was represented first and Crusoe landed upon an uninhabited, lonely island. His raft was then made and his goods transported. His efforts to make for himself a home have been faithfully pictured in the order of their happening. His cave home was most ingeniously represented with its cable fortifications and ladder always

in readiness. All the physical features of the island have been represented, and by the children. Even Crusoe's efforts at making pottery have been studied by the children with clay in their hands, and his difficulties have been theirs also, and so the idea of our dependence upon nature and upon each other has been made prominent.

After the natural divisions have been studied the children should take up some such work as "The Seven Little Sisters" or "Child Life in Many Lands". The home of each child as presented to the class should be pointed out on the relief globe, and that part of the continent should be modeled first by the teacher and then by the class.

When studying Gemila their knowledge of the desert should be recalled. They should be shown on the relief globe a desert, the one on which it is supposed this child, Gemila, lived while studying this story. They should model it and picture her home and life, on a large sand table. I can not reconcile myself to the idea of giving up the globe while studying child-life in other lands, for the most beautiful part of these lessons is the fact that we are all one great family, and that our lives are different because of our different locations and of the physical features of the earth.

Now we come to the real study of the globe and continent. Shall sand modeling give place to map study?

entirely? Frye very truly says in one of his excellent books, "The life of the earth springs from its slopes." As geography in its highest sense is the study of the earth as the home of man, a knowledge of globe and continent relief is absolutely necessary. We are so apt to take for granted in all grades, but more particularly in the higher grades, that words are intelligible to children, that we grow mechanical in our teaching and fail to present those vivid pictures so necessary in all our work. We also tell the children many things that they might find out for themselves with a little ingenious management on our part. In other words we talk too much.

I do not think maps present the vivid pictures of relief that need to be presented at this time.

The general plan of globe relief should be shown first on the relief globe, then upon a sand table, and the children should be led to see its use, and to compare the continents briefly. This should be taken up again more fully after the continents have been studied. It is rather too deep now, as the children know comparatively little of winds and currents. The study of continental slopes and water partings with reference to drainage and life, plant and animal, is the province of sand modeling at this time. To show the continent in relief, and to have the children model it from memory, save much explanation on the part of the teacher.

Having this vivid picture in their minds the teacher has but to question the children adroitly and they will tell why the Height of Land, being just where it is, renders the Mississippi of so much value to the southern part of North America, and makes the McKenzie a detriment to the northern part of it; why the great central plan has no rainfall and must be irrigated to become productive; why certain occupations are followed in one section of the country and not in another, even though they are in the same latitude; and why railroads and cities are located as they are.

Later, when winds and currents have been mastered, the children will reason out, with the aid of sand maps, why Arabia and Sahara are deserts, and how they affect the countries near them; why climates in the same latitude are sometimes so different, and how countries are influenced in products, occupations, and habits of people, by relief.

I need not multiply examples and I can not give, in this chapter, the technique of the work. Frye in his excellent book, "The Child and Nature", which every teacher should possess, explains this fully. I do not mean to say that this work can not be done with maps. I sincerely believe in maps and map reading, and I believe sand modeling should be dropped as soon as the children can do without it; but I do not think the drawn map can ever give the vivid picture of relief that comes from the sand modeled one.

The use of sand modeling is not confined to geogra-

phy; it is of great use in the study of history and literature.

My first experience in the use of sand for this purpose was in modeling the battle field of Bannockburn. I had never fully understood the situation myself, but the study I put upon it, that I might model it for the children, was a great help to me, and I felt fully repaid by the definite, intelligent recitations of the children. How much better the people of Switzerland would be understood in their sturdy stand for independence amidst kingdoms and empires, if the relief of the country was a clear picture in the minds of the children.

How can children understand the dikes of Holland, and appreciate the character of the Dutch people who have reclaimed so much of their land from the sea, without models? If the dikes were modeled while studying Phœbe Cary's "A Leak in the Dike" there would be better recitations and better written productions.

You will perhaps say I have wandered into many fields to say a little about sand modeling, but to me no subject stands alone; each forms a little nucleus around which all others revolve.

We must first become well grounded in principles, and do nothing thoughtlessly. If we have strong reasons for doing things before we do them we shall make fewer mistakes. "Think wrongly if you will," says Le Bruyer, "but in all cases think for yourselves."

## VIII

### FIELD LESSONS

Many and varied are the uses of the field lessons. There is no better way of teaching a child how to observe rightly than by taking him out face to face with nature. To come into close contact with its charms in company with a wiser head than his own, is a great eye-opener. He will see much more after such a lesson; the objects in nature will seem to come before him in all his walks as never before. Even the one who represents the wiser head will find the same thing true. A teacher said to me, on her return from a lesson on trees, tree fruits, and fall buds which she had given in her own yard in a city where there were many fine trees, "I never realized before that there could be so many beautiful and wonderful things that I had failed to see, right under my very eyes."

It is a mistake to try to do too much in one lesson. Every lesson should have a definite point, and that point should be brought out forcibly. One or two things, well seen, make the best field lesson, and there should be many of them.

One September not long ago I had two full rooms of beginners, one in which the children came from kin-

dergartens (there were two free kindergartens near my school), and one in which the children had never had this training. All who have taught beginners understand that the first difficult task with these children is to get them to talk freely. With my little kindergarten children there was no difficulty. They had overcome this diffidence in the kindergarten, but the others were so many little sealed packages. I used to wonder what they contained, but I seemed to have no power to open them.

One day Johnny stood up, and pointing to the window, cried out, "Der's a robin!" This gave us an idea that perhaps a field lesson would help matters.

On the following day the children were taken to a park which was a few blocks distant. They were gone most of the afternoon. The result was marvelous. They returned laden with autumn treasures,—birds nests, leaves, stones, nuts, seeds, and flowers.

As I came into the room they held up their specimens, readily answered my questions, ventured themselves to make statements, and finally ended by all talking at the same time.

"My leaf came from a cottonwood tree," said one. "This is a brown oak leaf," said another. "My leaf grew on a birch tree. The bark was white with little black specks on it," said another. "I saw a red squirrel," ventured another. "I saw him too!" "So

did I!" came from all around the room. "He had a big tail, and he ran up a tree." "We found a hickory nut tree in the park." "How did you know it was a hickory tree?" I asked. The child ran to me, and presenting a hickory nut, said, "Because some of these nuts were hanging on the tree, and some were under it." "We heard frogs by the river and they sang," cried one little boy. I asked how they sang. Silence ensued for a minute; words failed them. I tried to imitate a robin, and asked if it sounded like that. They burst into a hearty laugh. Whether it was caused by my ridiculous imitation, or the idea of frogs singing like that, I did not ascertain; however, it accomplished the purpose, for three or four children imitated frogs in a very creditable manner.

"I brang you a dandelion," said a little dull-eyed Bohemian child, running to offer his wilted treasure. I was startled; this child I had supposed could not even understand English, as not so much as yes or no had we ever before been able to get from him.

The after results of this lesson were very satisfactory. These children, had, in this beautiful autumn afternoon with nature, come out of their cocoons of bashfulness, and entered into a new life. They had been placed in such an environment that they had something to express, and expression came spontaneously.

We can not fill a child; he must fill himself. It is

our duty to place him near the living fountain and patiently wait for thirst to come. When it does come, he will drink, and he will offer to those around him that which he has found good.

In developing the definitions for the natural divisions of land and water, the field lesson is indispensable. This subject is taken up at length in the chapter on sand modeling.

Children should learn in the field lesson many such things as these: how parks are kept and managed, how the different kind of trees are cared for, how the macadamized road is made, how water pipes are laid, how springs are formed, about surface drainage, leaf fertilization, and the winter life of plants and trees.

The older children take great delight in gathering wild flowers for Memorial Day. The fact that this is a free gift, obtained by their own exertion, gives them real pleasure. The younger children are deprived of this pleasure unless some of their elders can go with them.

After talking with them of the day and its meaning, and instilling into their little hearts the right spirit of love and reverence for the noble men who died for their country and the oppressed, would it not be a good plan to take these children out into the woods to gather flowers for decorating the soldiers' graves?

This is the time to study the homes of the different

flowers,—the columbine, geranium, meadow pink, trillium, wake robin, wild rose, and other flowers that may bloom at this time. Attention may be called to the soil in which they thrive, whether they grow best in sunny or shady places, on hills or in moist ground. They may be led to notice what trees are in blossom, which blossoms are most fragrant, how many trees show signs of seeds, and what seeds are already sprouted on the ground.

Another good field lesson is one on the way the new leaf is folded in the leaf bud in different plants.

I knew a teacher who took her class out one afternoon for such a lesson. Happening to step into the hall as these pupils were passing on the following morning, I was forcibly reminded of great Birnam's wood coming to Dunsinane, for each pupil carried a branch of some kind. That afternoon I received forty-two letters describing the excursion and telling what they had learned. I present one.

Eighth Room, Peabody School,  
May 2nd, '95.

Dear Miss Gowdy:—

Our room went out yesterday afternoon to learn about the folding of the new leaf in the leaf bud. Mother nature packs each leaf away safely, and there it stays until the warm sunshine and spring rains burst the bud open. Then it unfolds, and out comes

the leaf. Leaves are folded in many different ways, and we never noticed how before. The ribbon grass is rolled up like a butterfly's sucking tube and so is the plum leaf. The maple leaves are folded up like a fan. The oak leaf looks like a closed book. Ferns have their leaves rolled down beginning at the apex. We had a pleasant time, and all the boys acted nice.

Your friend,

MARY JOHNSON.

While studying roots, the children should find the different kinds for themselves, dig them, notice their shapes and mouths and the soil in which they flourish.

I will give a full description of one very profitable lesson which I had the pleasure of witnessing not long ago. It was on soil formation and rock history. This room contained forty-six pupils averaging about ten years of age.

I was curious to see how this teacher, who was young and inexperienced, would conduct such a lesson.

Just enough preparation had been given the children to arouse their curiosity and make them eager to learn for themselves. It was about as follows. Something had been read to them about the formation of the earth by water and fire, from Sophie Herrick's "The Earth in the Past Ages", a child's geology. Most of these children lived near the Mississippi river; they were familiar with the appearance of the cuts and could

tell that the soil lay in layers or rows, sometimes parallel with the ground and sometimes irregular. They powdered stone and found it was exactly like soil. A simple story was told them of a man who traveled five times, at intervals of five hundred years, to the same spot, and of the changes he found there each time, illustrating that the earth is changing all the time. The children were asked at the conclusion of this story what it taught, and nearly every child had the right idea.

They were also told of Hugh Miller's boyhood; how he learned to use his eyes and of the good this did him in his after life. They were told that he found wonderful things in the rocks; that he did not simply say, "How strange!" when he found them, then go away and forget all about them, but that he wanted to know more; that he kept thinking and asking questions. Better still than this, he learned to read the histories for himself in the rocks, because he kept his eyes open.

The children were not told what Hugh Miller really found, but that they might bring their hammers that afternoon, go to the quarry near by, and find some of the same kind of things that he found in the Scotland quarry so many years ago.

They were anxious to go and very curious to know what Hugh Miller found. Each child carried a notebook and pencil. On arrival at the quarry they were

allowed for a time to break open the rocks and discover what they could. We expected them to find shells in the rocks, but they also found petrified wood and leaf forms, both of which they recognized with exclamations of joy.

The teacher then produced from her hand bag a glass tumbler and asked one of the children to fill it partly with water from a spring near by. She then put into the water some powdered rock and asked the children what became of it. They said it sank to the bottom. She next placed upon this a layer of yellow sand. That they also said sank to the bottom. Next some white shells were dropped in, and upon them she poured some of the powdered rock. Upon this were placed some tiny leaves and twigs, and upon these some white sand. When this was done the glass was full and the layers showed finely.

"Now look at this," said the teacher, "and then at the walls of the quarry and see if you think you know something about their formation, and how the shells, leaves, and wood came there." The answers were thoughtful and intelligent. The children were allowed to ask all the questions they wished, and they frequently took notes; they used their hammers a great deal, and never seemed to tire of finding new treasures in the rocks.

One little boy came running to me with a stone that

he said he really believed was granite. "Why do you think so?" I asked. "Because," he replied, "I read that granite is gray and very hard and it has little glistening things in it. I could not break this as I could the other stones and it sparkles." He was right; it was granite.

When the children were tired, their teacher called them to her, and told them to sit down in a circle and she would read to them what Hugh Miller found in the Scotland quarry; and she read the story from "The Earth in the Past Ages", explaining by nature's illustrations around her as she read. How delighted the children were to find that their own experience was so much like Hugh Miller's; as they expressed it, "He is just like us."

As they started to return to school, I noticed that this full and beautiful lesson had taken less than two hours. The following is one of the language papers written the next day.

#### OUR FIELD DAY

We went to the stone quarry yesterday. The rocks were in layers sometimes parallel with the ground, and sometimes bunched up like little hills. Water and fire placed them so. The water put layer upon layer, and the fire burst out and cracked the layers and raised them up in some places. We found shells in the rocks. The wood had petrified, that means turned to

stone. This tells us that trees were buried too. The trees will turn into earth and make soil. We found granite and agate. Hugh Miller found shells, leaves, wood and fishes in the rocks of a Scotland quarry years ago.

When we pound up stone fine it makes a soil that looks like clay. The rocks in the stone quarry were under water once. Small bushes and trees grow on the rocks. Their roots are on top of the rocks, because there is not enough soil to cover them. They will never grow big like those in good soil. We each brought back something we found. When we got into the school-room, we put our specimens in a long row over the blackboard, and under them Miss Shively wrote, "Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything."

GEORGE ECKERSTROM.

If the field lesson does nothing but lead the children to see that there is always something to look for, it has accomplished much. The fact that a child has learned to observe is usually made manifest first by the quantity of things he will bring to his teacher, and what he can tell about them, then by his questions, and finally by what he reads.

A truant is generally a great lover of nature, and he can often be won through field lessons by making him feel that he is a great help, and that his knowledge of

nature is worth much. He should be allowed to lead the way on these days, be sent out often for specimens, and be consulted regarding them. He may then conclude to study these things in company with his schoolmates.

Yes, the field lesson does pay. Is it Cowper who says:—

“ So it is when the mind is endued  
With a well judging taste from above,  
Then whether embellished or rude,  
'Tis nature alone that we love.  
The achievements of art may amuse,  
May even our wonder excite,  
But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse  
A lasting and sacred delight.”

## IX

### PRACTICAL KINDERGARTEN TRAINING

Near the banks of the broad Mississippi in what would, perhaps, be called the slums of Minneapolis, is situated one of its most interesting schools. The district include the Mississippi flats, better known as the Bohemian Flats, where not only the Bohemians but many other European nationalities are represented. This school is also situated between two excellent free kindergartens.

Twice a year, in September and again in March, children from these kindergartens who have passed the age of six years, migrate in little flocks to the school I have mentioned. At the same time many others who have never attended either of the kindergartens, are also admitted.

One September not long ago nearly one hundred children applied for admittance, and as such a large number necessitated opening two first primary rooms it was thought best to divide these children into groups; those who had been in kindergarten in one group, and those who had not in the other. Those who had not been in the kindergarten were put in charge of a teacher of long experience and one who

had a name for getting excellent results from any material given her. It was meant to give them a fair chance. Those who came from the kindergartens were given to a teacher of little experience, but one who had great possibilities.

It is not a calamity for a teacher to be young and inexperienced, provided she has an engaging manner, loves children, takes kindly to criticism, and is willing to work. As this young teacher possessed all these fine qualities, the kindergarten children were provided for.

By the holidays the kindergarten children were decidedly ahead, and at the end of the year they were fully five months in advance of the others. They were naturally no brighter children, and came from families no more intelligent than the others.

The progress of these two classes was made a careful study during the year, and these points noted:—

First—The children coming from the kindergartens could understand and speak the English language. Many of the others knew few words, and it takes from one to three months to prepare such children to do, comprehensively, even the simplest of public school work; for nothing is done comprehensively until something of its ultimate use is understood.

Second—They could march and sing (to hear them sing their little kindergarten morning songs was

enough to make a woman resolve to work for these institutions all the rest of her life), they could thread their own needles, prick their industrial cards and sew them neatly; in fact, they could use their hands so well that writing and drawing came very natural to them. They could also distinguish primary colors and make many creditable designs.

These may seem trivial things to any but the teacher of the beginners who knows the time spent in teaching them.

Third—The children came to school feeling a genial good will toward their school work, toward the teacher, and toward each other. There was a bright, helpful, sociable spirit shown: almost too sociable it was sometimes thought, but too much sociability is better than none; and they soon learned to reserve it until the proper time. Obedience was almost universal among them. A naughty child, to one who has been well-trained in a kindergarten, is a child to be pitied, never one to be imitated.

Froebel says: "From his earliest age the child yields himself to justice and right with surprising tact, for we rarely see him avoiding them voluntarily." I would, rather say, the child yields himself, from his earliest age, to the influences about him. In all my experience with kindergarten children, I can remember but one really naughty child. His conduct seemed to

have no bad influence upon the others; they simply regarded him with the utmost charity. This is one of the finest points in good kindergarten training.

Fourth—Each child seemed to feel a responsibility for his own work. The minute he knew what his task was, he went to work. True, he often wished to know what those around him were doing, and occasionally his desire to help got the better of him; still his own work was uppermost in his mind. This was not all; when he had finished it his question was, “What shall I do next?” Idleness and mischief are easily eliminated from such a room, and without the lecture system which is so distasteful to children.

The matter of their looking at each other’s work was, at first, thought a very bad fault. It was feared that the habit might develop into cheating. From an experienced kindergartener came these suggestive words: “The children are allowed to look at each other’s work in the kindergarten; they know no better. I think to have a certain time when each child might show his work to his neighbor, would be the best way to settle this difficulty.” This plan was tried and it proved a success.

Fifth—The kindergarten children were observing, and in the right direction. There are two kinds of observation, as there are two kinds of memory; one is healthy and beneficial; the other is worse than useless. Let me illustrate.

Two boys entered late in the fall after the nature studies had been discontinued. They were both very observing, but one had been trained in a kindergarten to observe properly, and the other, like Topsy, "just came up."

When spring came, to all who had learned to write sentences the teacher gave little note-books to which she tied pencils. In these note-books they were to record what they had observed in going to and from school and to show to her each day. Both came in one morning, beaming with pleasure, and holding tightly clasped in their hands their precious books. Little kindergarten had written: "I saw a robin redbreast. It hops. Why does it hop? My teacher nose." In this will be found two germs of a scientist; what I saw, and where I can find out about it. He had farther written: "I found a acron. It had busted open. The wet did it." The other little boy, presenting his book with as much pleasure, had this record: "I saw May Erickson. She had a red dress." Below was this explanatory note: "She is my girl."

Sixth—The kindergarten children were imaginative; not so the others. It is not necessary to dwell upon the value of this training in the best development of reading, language, nature study, and arithmetic.

The back yard of the flat in which I live swarms every pleasant afternoon with children. They are all Amer-

ican children, and from my observation of their plays, I have come to the conclusion that the American child is naturally imaginative. He does not so much need this training, though I do not think it can injure him; but some of these little foreigners, notably the Bohemian, are almost devoid of imagination. His world consists of just what he can get through the senses; he seems to have no mental sight. In his case the training of the imagination is an absolute necessity. In the kindergarten he gets this through pictures, plays, songs, and stories. To those who come to the public school without this training it must be given, and the first primary room must adopt the kindergarten methods.

It is a wonderful influence that the free kindergarten teacher exerts over the mothers, homes, and families through these little children. She is a home missionary, and she does much to make good citizens. This is the crowning point of free kindergarten work.

A thoughtful, intelligent mother said to me a short time ago: "I know your love and admiration for the kindergarten is prompted by a wish to uplift the lives of the children and to give them ideals, but it has always seemed to me that this early work belongs to the mothers, and that to put our children into the kindergarten is destroying the sweet home spirit."

Such a mother can train her own children, and she

will do it better in many ways than it could possibly be done by the best kindergartener.

Among the poor people many cares and bread-winning worries prevent the mothers from giving their children proper attention; but the kindergarten is not more necessary in such cases than it is where the mothers are so occupied with dress and society as to be unwilling to devote time to their children, but leave these children the greater part of the time in the care of ignorant and often vicious servants.

The question is not always, can the mothers train their children, but it often resolves itself into, *will they do it?* And these children must not be forgotten while this all important question is being answered.

## X

### A FEW SUGGESTIONS ABOUT DISCIPLINE

There is much theory about the correct discipline, but comparatively few principles that are really valuable guides for us in our work. Perhaps this is because child study is as yet scientifically a new subject. We all herald it with true interest, even in its crude state.

We can not say do this or do that in discipline and make it general, as children's natures are so different.

Discipline covers order and character and character building. The former, though very important and a foundation for the latter in many ways, is on a much lower plane and does not require so much study. Order is that military part of discipline that enables us to carry on our work in the quickest and most satisfactory manner, and with the least amount of friction. It is system in work, and it bears the same relation to character-building that an act does to habit. Military discipline is all right, acts repeated form habits, but as soon as habits are formed, we must allow freedom. It is never well to cramp children. They should feel at home in the school-room. We must teach them to sit, rise, stand, walk, hold their heads properly, write in a correct position, and above

all to obey promptly. Neither teachers nor pupils will ever have cause to regret having learned these things.

The effect of the body over the mind has never been fully appreciated. When it is, many of the difficulties in discipline will be eliminated. Self-respect becomes a necessity to the boy or girl who stands and walks correctly, and self-respect is only possible where self is respectable. Honesty becomes a necessity to those who hold their heads properly and look into our eyes while speaking to us. While building up a figure that is strong and symmetrical, a good body training should help to build up men and women in every sense. A physical culture that does not do both has not fulfilled its mission.

Another way to promote order is to come before the classes thoroughly prepared to teach them. If we know exactly how and what to do in every recitation, who knows it quicker than the children? The teacher who is ill prepared is at their mercy. We have all realized this at some time; perhaps it was when organizing a new school. How the children watch the new teacher! They are making mental records of his ability, and as he appears on that morning he is likely to appear for sometime, perhaps always. The teacher who knows what to do at all times is generally a success in the matter of good order; and to have good order generally means to be able to teach, though not always.

We must bring ourselves into the school-room. We are all born with dual natures, one for home and our nearest friends, and one for strangers or mere acquaintances. Those who have read Dickens' "Great Expectations", will remember Mr. Wemmick, who had his office character and his home character. At the office he advised Pip by no means to lend money to his friend who was in financial difficulty, but invited the boy to his home to spend the evening and there advised the loan. Whatever we wish to appear we must be, and we must bring that character to school. Children cannot be kept at arms length, but they must feel that we are their friends and advisers.

A sweet, low, well modulated voice is a powerful factor in good discipline. It must never be allowed to become high-pitched or rasping and must never be raised when angry. Those who can not control themselves must not expect to control others.

There are four rules that have helped me and which I try always to keep.

First Rule.—Never antagonize children.

If a teacher is a tyrant, always contriving ways and means of abridging the freedom of her pupils, they will as surely retaliate by being dishonest, tricky ey-servants as any other human beings in bondage. "Don't do that" and "Stop that", are expressions that are very hateful to children and should be ban-

ished from our vocabulary. If children obey these commands, it is only that they fear the consequences. Is this the ideal of obedience we wish to set before them? It must be influence, not tyranny that governs our schools. Influence is gained by sympathy, and will always be in proportion to the intellectual sympathy.

We can not make over the dishonest, lazy, vicious or mischievous child who has gained these habits through the several years of his life, in a few days. Much patience will be needed to reform him. "I can not be an angel all at once," said one such child to me when I harshly reproved him for falling back into his old habits, and it was a lesson to me.

We must never let the children come to look upon us as police officers. A principal once told me that in the new building to which she was transferred, the order was outwardly excellent; every child moved in the same way at the same time while passing in and out through the hall or about the building. At the head and foot of each stairway a teacher was stationed on guard. When the line passed out at noon and at night each teacher led her line marching backward, military fashion, beating time though there was piano music. She watched this for about a week and discovered that these children were mere eye-servants, ready at any moment to disobey any and all rules. Honor seemed to be a thing unknown to many of them.

They had been so thoroughly guarded that they felt themselves akin to criminals. At the end of the week she said to them: "I have always trusted my pupils to go in and out of the school-house and through the halls without being watched, and I do not believe you are so different from the other children I have known. I will try you one week, and if at the end of that time, I find you untrustworthy we will return to the old way." Their faces brightened at this news and they promised to watch themselves. Very little trouble was experienced and it is needless to say they never returned to the guard system. This illustrates military discipline carried too far and kept up too long.

We all dread marble time. It always means tardiness, idleness, dirty hands and other bad habits. Is it best then to forbid marble playing, confiscate all marbles found, and lecture daily? Nothing of the sort. Better have a little talk about marbles, how they are made, the material and when first used; then say something like this:—"I have noticed two things about marble time; it means tardiness, and if you will look at your hands and clothes, I think I need not tell you of the other thing that I have noticed. Tardiness we cannot make up. Time lost is lost forever. If you must leave the room to wash your hands, you lose precious time. What had better be done?" I have tried this a great many times and it is no theory; the

children will at once willingly agree to leave their marbles at home. Every one will be pleasant about it and each will think he is following his own good judgment.

One day, not long ago, as I came to school, I noticed that our usually neat yard was literally strewn with papers. The boys were making what they called "paper snappers". As fast as one was broken it was thrown down and another made to share the same fate. I was provoked, and my first impulse was to scold, for I learned to do this before I knew the better way, and the power of habit is strong; but instead, I asked the boys to show me one, to unfold and refold it, to show me how they made it pop so loud and where they learned to make them. By this time there was quite a crowd gathered around me. Then I said, "Those are funny playthings, but they do not seem to improve the appearance of our yard, do they?" Without a word they commenced picking up the papers. When the yard was neat again I said, "Play with the papers all you wish, but keep the broken ones in your pockets, and when you pass into the room put them into the waste baskets." I had no more trouble and soon they disappeared entirely.

We should always try to lead children into proper judgments, and drive them to duty only when all else fails.

These are small things, of course, but our experi-

ences are mostly made up of small things, and if we take care of the small things, the larger things will take care of themselves.

Second Rule—If we must punish let it be retributive punishment.

This is nature's way and it is the only way in which the child sees absolute justice. The untidy child should be required to clean his desk and the floor around it, if they have been soiled by his carelessness.

A bright, but very quick-tempered little boy became so angry at being sent back to his room from the line one day that he threw his cap so forcibly at the teacher's desk as to upset the inkstand and send the contents over the floor, desk, and chairs. He had been talked to a great deal about his lack of self-control, so his teacher simply said, "I am sorry Willie, but this must all be cleaned up nicely before you can go home." She provided water, soap, and sapolio and Willie worked faithfully one and one-half hours to repair damages. He made no objections, but cried most of the time truly repentant tears.

The destructive child should be required to replace property damaged or destroyed, the idle child to make up for lost time; the child who quarrels or calls names may lose his playtime until he has decided to be polite on the playground, the dishonest child should be made to feel that he has lost the confidence of his friends

and can not be trusted until he has proven himself trustworthy. He should, however, be watched closely and met half way. We can not always know the cause of dishonesty.

I have known cases where it seemed a good thing for a child to feel that his conduct had the disapproval of all his playmates as well as that of the teacher. I remember a boy who was rude, idle and disorderly in school, disturbing all around him. After many disturbances had been settled and all punishment seemed in vain, his teacher said to the school: "Harry's conduct is a disgrace to this room. His parents send him here to learn, but instead he idles away his time and steals yours and mine. Something must be done. What shall it be?" "Whip him," suggested one. "O, no, she replied, "I am not here to whip children, my business is to teach them." They then decided that it would be best to send him home and not allow him there again until he was ready to be gentlemanly and work with the rest.

"Very well," said the teacher, "they do not seem to want you here, Harry; you may go home." The child left the room sobbing in the most heartbroken manner. "This punishment," she said, "made a deeper impression upon him than any amount of whipping could possibly have made, as he felt the justice in it and knew that it was only a last resort."

When he returned, promising to do right, the children were asked to decide the question of restoring him. They unanimously decided in his favor, and he was sent to his seat a subdued child.

The most wonderful change I have ever seen wrought in a child was wrought by this method. We had one year in my school a very bad boy whose conduct was having an evil influence on his schoolmates. His principal delight seemed to be in trying to create an uproar anywhere, everywhere. At last I saw his father who said the next time Fred gave me trouble he would send the boy to the reform school. Not the first, second or third offence was reported; Fred who knew how matters stood, tried for some time to keep within bounds, as he very much dreaded the reform school; but the final eruption came and his father decided to send him. After the boy had left the room I said to the children: "Fred's father has decided to send him to a reform school. While I do not consider you all to blame in this matter, I do feel that if he must go, you have helped to send him there. You have laughed when he did bad things, and watched him when he played in school and tried to annoy his teacher. If, instead you had kept at your work, and paid no attention to him, and so made him understand that you did not think such things were either right or smart, he

would have been a better boy." They looked as though they were attending Fred's funeral.

"Now," I asked, "do you wish to save him?" "Yes, yes," they eagerly answered. "If I bring him back what will you do?" They promised neither to laugh at him, nor to watch him, but to ignore his bad actions until he should learn that he had no friends in such things.

I told Fred's father what I had done and asked him to give Fred another chance. He was only too glad to do so.

Soon Fred tried his old tricks, but all in vain; his followers were in better business. One look from the teacher effectually settled any one who seemed inclined to watch him. Fred, who was naturally very bright in his studies, became a model scholar, a little gentleman and the pride of his family. His expression entirely changed, and he was; when I last saw him, what one would call a fine looking-boy. The teachers at the mission Sunday school asked what we had done to him to change him thus.

It is often better to give an obstinate child a choice between two things. "You may stay and do your work properly or be marked zero in your lesson," or "I will give you a quarter of an hour to do this properly and if it is not done then I will see your parents." The child should feel that the decision rests entirely

with him, and no anxiety should be shown about his choice.

A wise teacher had a boy who was impudent to her. She asked him to remain after school. When they were alone she asked him what he thought a gentlemanly boy should do when he had been rude and impolite. But he was sullen and would not answer. "Sit down and think about it," she said pleasantly. He still hung his head and remained obstinate, so she finally said, "Well; go home now, I am sorry you cannot think, but if you ever find out please tell me." In the morning he watched for her; he followed her up stairs; he came up to her desk and said, "I was mean yesterday Miss H.; please 'scuse me." And he was 'scused.

Third Rule—Instead of moralizing or lecturing, use stories illustrating the truths you wish to impress upon the mind.

The first true teacher on earth taught by parables.

A boy will use a bat all day long and come home happy; but if he uses an ax with the same motion for an hour or two he is completely exhausted. Stories bear something the same relation to lectures that the bat does to the ax.

I once knew a school to be cured of dishonest and tricky conduct, by reading to them the Lincoln stories by J. B. McClure. Nothing was said of the lessons or

morals in these stories; they were allowed to creep into the hearts of the children, and quietly but surely they did the work. "Poor Boys who became Famous," and "Girls who became Famous", both by Sarah K. Bolton are valuable books for this work.

Fourth Rule—(For principals.) Never let a child see that you do not approve of what his teacher has done.

Private talks are all right, but the children must not lose confidence in their teacher. It surely means trouble for teacher and principal, and injury to the children.

#### Fifth Rule—Study your pupils.

There is good in every child and we should study until we find it; then work along that line. It may be love for his mother, a fondness for pictures, or even so small a thing as pride in his dog. I think a truant is a truant because he loves nature better than he loves school. We are not troubled with winter truants. I have in school one boy who plays truant in the spring and early fall. He is a good scholar at any other time. He loves his teacher, and will do anything for her except to come to school when the whole realm of nature calls him in the opposite direction.

Sometime ago on a spring morning when I went into his room I noticed that his seat had been changed from the back to the front of the room. This was an

indication that he was getting troublesome. "Spring fever," I thought; "we must begin operations." I sat and watched him for a few minutes. I was right—he neither heard or saw anything that was going on in the room, and that "out in the woods" look was on his face. A plan came to me. "Children," I said "I must have some pussy willows this morning; do any of you know where I can get them?" Up went several hands, and my truant's first of all; I felt sure he would know. "James," I said, "I will excuse you for an hour if you will get me some." He needed no second invitation. Within an hour he returned with his hands full and looking proud and happy. I think we can keep James in school hereafter. Whenever he is restless and inattentive I think his teacher will say to the school something like this: "If you do your best this afternoon we will get out earlier and go to Riverside after flowers." Sympathy is the key that unlocks the heart; it is the key to character.

Teacher, study your troublesome pupil, sympathize with him, influence him, manage him, *but never give him up.*





# School Bulletin Publications

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